



Billing Code 6717-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. CP13-160-000]

Northwest Pipeline GP; Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Blue Water LNG Meter Station and Request for Comments on Environmental Issues

The staff of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission) will prepare an environmental assessment (EA) that will discuss the environmental impacts of the Blue Water Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Meter Project involving construction and operation of facilities by Northwest Pipeline GP (Northwest) in Benton County, Washington. The Commission will use this EA in its decision-making process to determine whether the project is in the public convenience and necessity.

This notice announces the opening of the scoping process the Commission will use to gather input from the public and interested agencies on the project. Your input will help the Commission staff determine what issues they need to evaluate in the EA. Please note that the **scoping period will close on July 8, 2013.**

This notice is being sent to the Commission's current environmental mailing list for this project. State and local government representatives should notify their constituents of this proposed project and encourage them to comment on their areas of concern.

Northwest provided landowners adjacent to the proposed meter station with a fact sheet prepared by the FERC entitled "An Interstate Natural Gas Facility On My Land? What Do I Need To Know." This fact sheet addresses a number of typically-asked questions, including how to participate in the Commission's proceedings. It is also available for viewing on the FERC website (www.ferc.gov).

Summary of the Proposed Project

Northwest proposes to construct and operate a new LNG meter station and associated piping within the yard of its existing Plymouth Peak Shaving Plant (Plant). The Plant is located on about 72 acres on the north side of the Columbia River in Benton County, Washington, about 19 miles south of the city of Kennewick. The Plant consists of two LNG storage tanks with a capacity of 1.2 billion cubic feet each, two liquefaction trains capable of liquefying 12 million standard cubic feet per day of natural gas, vaporization facilities capable of vaporizing 305,300 dekatherms of natural gas per day

(Dth/d), and a boil-off gas compression system.¹

The proposed Blue Water LNG Meter could supply up to 216,000 gallons of LNG per day (or 17,705 Dth/d) to Transfuels LLC (Transfuels). Transfuels proposes to construct and operate a non-jurisdictional LNG trunk loading facility on 20 acres of current agricultural land directly north of the fenced boundary for Northwest's Plant. The jurisdictional facilities proposed by Northwest would include:

- a new 360-foot-long pipeline, supported on a pipe rack, to convey LNG from the existing transfer pipeline between the storage tanks, through the new meter runs, and then to the custody transfer point at the plant boundary fence;
- three new 32-foot-long meter runs and a one-inch-diameter receipt meter and three-inch-diameter piping to handle boil-off-gas coming back from the custody transfer point, all covered by a 20-foot by 24-foot shelter;
- two new auxiliary meters to measure gas volumes used by customers;
- new chromatographic gas analysis and electronic flow measurement equipment, housed in a fully enclosed building, 26-feet-long by 22-feet-wide, located adjacent to the north of the meter runs shelter;
- a new two-inch-diameter vent line to contain and transfer gas to an existing relief header in the event gas is released, supported on the new pipe rack;

¹ These facilities were authorized by the FERC in Docket Nos. CP74-46-000 and CP76-106-000.

and

- a new cable tray to house power and communication wires, supported on the new pipe rack.

The general location of the project facilities is shown in appendix 1.²

Land Requirements for Construction

All construction activities would take place within the 72-acre property of Northwest's Plant. Excavation for new facilities related to the Blue Water LNG Meter Station project would cover about 0.05 acre.

The EA Process

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires the Commission to take into account the environmental impacts that could result from an action whenever it considers the issuance of a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity. The NEPA also requires us³ to discover and address concerns the public may have about proposals.

² The appendices referenced in this notice will not appear in the Federal Register. Copies of appendices were sent to all those receiving this notice in the mail and are available at www.ferc.gov using the link called "eLibrary" or from the Commission's Public Reference Room, 888 First Street NE, Washington, DC 20426, or call (202) 502-8371. For instructions on connecting to eLibrary, refer to the last page of this notice.

³ "We," "us," and "our" refer to the environmental staff of the Commission's Office of Energy Projects.

This process is referred to as “scoping.” The main goal of the scoping process is to focus the analysis in the EA on the important environmental issues. By this notice, the Commission requests public comments on the scope of the issues to address in the EA. We will consider all filed comments during the preparation of the EA.

In the EA we will discuss impacts that could occur as a result of the construction and operation of the proposed project under these general headings:

- geology and soils;
- water resources and wetlands;
- vegetation and wildlife;
- cultural resources;
- air quality and noise; and
- public safety.

We will also evaluate reasonable alternatives to the proposed project or portions of the project, and make recommendations on how to lessen or avoid impacts on the various resource areas.

The EA will present our independent analysis of the issues. The EA will be available in the public record through eLibrary. Depending on the comments received

during the scoping process, we may also publish and distribute the EA to the public for an allotted comment period. We will consider all comments on the EA before making our recommendations to the Commission. To ensure we have the opportunity to consider and address your comments, please carefully follow the instructions in the Public Participation section on page 5 of this notice.

With this notice, we are asking agencies with jurisdiction by law and/or special expertise with respect to the environmental issues of this project to formally cooperate with us in the preparation of the EA.⁴ Agencies that would like to request cooperating agency status should follow the instructions for filing comments provided under the Public Participation section of this notice.

Consultations Under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act

In accordance with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's implementing regulations for section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, we are using this notice to initiate consultations with the Washington State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and to solicit their views, and those of other government agencies, interested Indian tribes, and the public on the project's potential effects on historic properties.⁵ We

⁴ The Council on Environmental Quality regulations addressing cooperating agency responsibilities are at Title 40, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 1501.6.

⁵ The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's regulations are at 36 CFR Part 800. Those regulations define historic properties as any prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure, or object included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

will define the project-specific Area of Potential Effects (APE) in consultation with the SHPO as the project develops. On natural gas facility projects, the APE at a minimum encompasses all areas subject to ground disturbance (examples include construction right-of-way, contractor/pipe storage yards, and access roads). Our EA for this project will document our findings on the impacts on historic properties and summarize the status of consultations under section 106.

Currently Identified Environmental Issues

We have already identified several issues that we think deserve attention based on a preliminary review of the proposed facilities and the environmental information provided by Northwest. This preliminary list of issues may be changed based on your comments and our analysis.

- Safety issues related to vapor dispersion from the jurisdictional Blue Water Meter Station; and
- Environmental review of the non-jurisdictional Transfuels LNG loading facility by Benton County, Washington.

Public Participation

You can make a difference by providing us with your specific comments or concerns about the project. Your comments should focus on the potential environmental effects, reasonable alternatives, and measures to avoid or lessen environmental impacts. The more specific your comments, the more useful they will be. To ensure that your comments are timely and properly recorded, please send your comments so that the Commission receives them in Washington, DC on or before **July 8, 2013**.

For your convenience, there are three methods which you can use to submit your comments to the Commission. In all instances please reference the project docket number (CP13-160-000) with your submission. The Commission encourages electronic filing of comments and has expert staff available to assist you at (202) 502-8258 or efiling@ferc.gov.

- (1) You can file your comments electronically using the [eComment](#) feature on the Commission's website (www.ferc.gov) under the link to [Documents and Filings](#). This is an easy method for interested persons to submit brief, text-only comments on a project;
- (2) You can file your comments electronically using the [eFiling](#) feature on the Commission's website (www.ferc.gov) under the link to [Documents and](#)

[Filings](#). With eFiling, you can provide comments in a variety of formats by attaching them as a file with your submission. New eFiling users must first create an account by clicking on “[eRegister](#).” You must select the type of filing you are making. If you are filing a comment on a particular project, please select “Comment on a Filing”; or

- (3) You can file a paper copy of your comments by mailing them to the following address:

Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street NE, Room 1A
Washington, DC 20426

Environmental Mailing List

The environmental mailing list includes federal, state, and local government representatives and agencies; elected officials; environmental and public interest groups; interested Indian tribes; and local libraries and newspapers. This list also includes all affected landowners (as defined in the Commission’s regulations) who are potential right-of-way grantors, whose property may be used temporarily for project purposes, or who own homes within certain distances of aboveground facilities, and anyone who submits

comments on the project. We will update the environmental mailing list as the analysis proceeds to ensure that we send the information related to this environmental review to all individuals, organizations, and government entities interested in and/or potentially affected by the proposed project.

If we publish and distribute the EA, copies will be sent to the environmental mailing list for public review and comment. **If you would prefer to receive a paper copy of the document instead of the compact disk version, or if you would like to remove your name from the mailing list, please return the attached Information Request (appendix 2).**

Becoming an Intervenor

In addition to involvement in the EA scoping process, you may want to become an “intervenor” which is an official party to the Commission’s proceeding. Intervenors play a more formal role in the process and are able to file briefs, appear at hearings, and be heard by the courts if they choose to appeal the Commission's final ruling. An intervenor formally participates in the proceeding by filing a request to intervene. Instructions for becoming an intervenor are in the User’s Guide under the “e-filing” link on the Commission’s website.

Additional Information

Additional information about the project is available from the Commission's Office of External Affairs, at **(866) 208-FERC**, or on the FERC website at www.ferc.gov using the “eLibrary” link. Click on the eLibrary link, click on “General Search” and enter the docket number, excluding the last three digits in the Docket Number field (i.e., CP13-160). Be sure you have selected an appropriate date range. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at FercOnlineSupport@ferc.gov or toll free at (866) 208-3676, or for TTY, contact (202) 502-8659. The eLibrary link also provides access to the texts of formal documents issued by the Commission, such as orders, notices, and rulemakings.

In addition, the Commission now offers a free service called eSubscription which allows you to keep track of all formal issuances and submittals in specific dockets. This can reduce the amount of time you spend researching proceedings by automatically providing you with notification of these filings, document summaries, and direct links to the documents. Go to www.ferc.gov/esubscribenow.htm.

Finally, public meetings or site visits will be posted on the Commission’s calendar located at www.ferc.gov/EventCalendar/EventsList.aspx along with other related information.

Dated: June 6, 2013

Kimberly D. Bose,
Secretary.

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